

PREFACE.

Something relating to the following work has been on my mind for twenty years past.

In my younger days I made a few memorandums and receipts; but finding as I advanced in reading a little on physic, and conversing with my friends who were physicians, that far the greatest part of them were trivial, I omitted making many more. However, having an insatiable taste and constant desire for relieving the afflicted and diseased, I have still been trying my hand from my youth up, and I am now in my sixtieth year.

My father, old Hezekiah Smith, of Jersey, was always, since I could remember him, a *home old man*, or *Indian Doctor*, with whom, in my raising, I contracted ideas, practice and experience, that have never left me.

There are a few things I wish to state in my preface.

I acknowledge the kindness of my friends in the medical profession, in every place where I have lived for forty years past, and I must acknowledge that I am conscious I shall transgress a little in publishing their communications without their express leave: but I console myself by recollecting, that great minds are generally liberal.

About thirty years ago I called on old Dr. Wilkey, a German, who had been in the business of his profession, in the Flanders wars. He proposed to me to spend a few days with him, to instruct me in some knowledge which he had gained in his long life, and which he regretted should die with him: especially to

make his *Leotril*, a liquid which he prepared; for the obtaining of which he had paid a large sum in Flanders. With this medicine he did many of his cures, both in physic and surgery. With this, said he, "I can put a person in a complete salivation in ten minutes. I need only throw this with a syringe into any sore, ulcer or wound, and it is fit at once for healing. Yes (said he) if there is a bullet lodged, it need scarcely ever be cut out; and a cancer in a woman's breast, I have never failed to cure with it." I only called to spend a few hours with this eminent old German, on my route from Virginia to Georgia, but have regretted, perhaps a thousand times, that I missed this great opportunity, so kindly proposed. I sometimes think of going yet to see his children (for he had some beautiful young folks, children by an English wife, when I was there) and try to obtain this *Leotril*, and add it to my prescriptions.

There is an herb cultivated among the Germans, on the west side of the big Miami, I think it is in Montgomery county, particularly, I have been told, by the old Dunkard preacher, Jacob Miller. This herb, I have full reason to believe, is an infallible cure for the bite of the mad dog, or hydrophobia. I have seen this herb in powder, and was assured that only this was used for several, man and beast, where no scruple could be entertained of their having been bitten with a mad dog, and nothing of the dire complaint was experienced; while those creatures to which it was omitted, fell victims. I cannot describe this herb, nor do I remember its name. I remember the dose is only what you may lift on the point of a case knife in powder. This is to be eaten on a piece of bread and butter, three mornings successively, and the cure is effected.

I have mentioned the two foregoing remedies, that if I should never live to obtain them, other persons may avail themselves of them.

If vouchers for the efficacy of my medicine herein described, may be wished for, I can observe that Mr. Edward Bartholomew, who lived in Philadelphia and kept the excise office in 1790, was one of my patients. He was a very heavy fat man; one of his legs had been broken, which often inflamed, and appeared like mortifying. After he had given out applying to doctors, I undertook him; no cure, no pay. I saw him in Philadelphia, about fourteen years afterwards; he then gave me full credit for my applications, tho he had paid me in a few weeks after I first tried my means. His leg, when I first began with him, was as black as an old hat, and as big again as the other. My applications are described in Nos. 23 and 28.

Another voucher I will mention, is Mr. David Jones, a young Baptist minister, who lately lived with Dr. Samuel Jones, of Lower Dublin, Philadelphia county; who, residing a few years ago in the Miami country, I heard that he was sick, and went to see him. I found him attended by two doctors. His disorder was what I call the second grade of the bilious fever, attended with vomiting almost without intermission, which had then been for eight days. One of the doctors tarried with him, and I looked on, until the doctor and all present were convinced that he must die, and that quickly, unless something more effectual could take place. I then begged him of the doctor, who afterwards tarried with us for twenty-four hours.

I gave him my emetic, No. 1, and tho' he had thrown every thing suddenly from his stomach before, this lay on for about twenty minutes: he then had three or four reaches, which were moderate, throwing up considerable bile, notwithstanding his violent vomiting before. At this time we thought that alarming symptoms plainly appeared of an approaching mortification; at least his breath, mouth

and tongue plainly shewed a putrid state: But all yielded to applications, which under God, effected a sudden cure. As soon as the above emetic had done, I began to apply No. 26, to overcome the cholic and spasmodic affections and No. 25, to act as a tonic, which succeeded so that in one hour he had manifest relief and ease. These two last numbers he continued to use, as directed in the present prescriptions; and in one week's time was able comfortably to ride about. He mended unusually fast, and became healthy and well; taking no other medicine. But he continued to take No. 25 three times a day, according to the prescription.

This mode of treating all bilious complaints, I have proved for several years past with general success; and several instances somewhat astonish me when I think of them. And I have found out that in learning to cure one, I have learned to cure them all. For all the bilious tribe of disorders, if I am not much mistaken, will yield to the process described in the case of Mr. David Jones.

But before I conclude, I wish to state my objections against the use of calomel. I learned in early life to give calomel both as a purge and as an alterative. And tho' I gave it, I believe, with the usual success, it is clear to me now, that I since have done much better without it. I have therefore left it out of my prescriptions.

In the winter of 1777, I inoculated about 130 persons for the small-pox. To the first parcel of them I gave calomel in the usual way, with jalap to work it off. The whole of them were allowed to have the small-pox very favorably, so that my practise justified itself. But I observed that every one whose physic had worked him pretty well, as we say, had a sufficient portion of the small-pox; but on the contrary those whose physic had scarcely moved them, all had it very favorably; I then con-

cluded that I would try Warner's pills No. 28. And living at my father's house at that time, I had plenty of them, where they were always kept. Accordingly I gave them to my next squad of small-pox patients which were about twenty. Observing the abstemious diet usual, I gave them nothing till about one day before I expected the fever: then I gave a small portion of the pills above named in such a manner as to purge very little if any, which is usually the case when they are given. But what was very special, there were scarcely any of them that were sick with the fever—and they had small-pox scarcely enough to give any of them a receipt. Afterwards I proceeded with all the rest in the like manner, and with the same success; and of several families it might be said, they wanted two cooks for one nurse.

While I lived in Georgia, a very great attention was paid by almost every body there, to calomel and jalap; for after Dr. Rush's publications relative to the Yellow Fever, there was calomel and jalap prescribed for every thing; so that the poor old tartar emetic lay dead in the shops: and I, like other fools, gave it liberally, and it was thought to do well; and so I went on for some years, not considering that *all the cases* in Georgia, and other hot climates, during the nine warmest months, were *bilious*, and two-thirds of them in the other months, and always belong to debility; or what Brown's Elements state to be the asthenic diathesis; and in every instance, therefore, I think calomel is improper. Besides, I have noticed that when I gave No. 2 (which we had abundance of in Georgia) the relief was sudden; and if sudorific and bracing medicines were joined, to hold fast the advantage of the purge, the disorder was soon cured, and the patient became healthy. But the speedy restoration to good health was not half so common when the calomel was

used; and besides, a state of languor frequently rested upon the patient who had taken calomel, with a dull heavy pain about the abdomen or stomach, attended with other expressions of remaining debility.

If ever calomel has been given to advantage, I conclude it has been in the pleurisy; but I will venture to compare notes at any time with those who use calomel, and only let me have No. 2 or No. 3, there being no comparison (commonly speaking) between the success with which the latter is marked and the former, both as to certainty and speed of the cure.

Now if we can do better without calomel than with it, both in debility and plethora, why should we not throw by the use of it? especially considering that the unhappy sufferer may perhaps happen to take a drink of cool water, or otherwise transgress. I then conclude

1. In bilious cases only, move the bile by taking No. 1, and then follow it with No. 4, or its preparations, or No. 5; then by some course keep up perspiration, and you need no calomel.

2. In plethoric and inflammatory cases, take No. 2 or 3, and bleed, if the pulse is high; mind to restore perspiration, then brace up a little (say by agrimony tea) and you need no calomel.

I call myself an *Indian Doctor*, because I have incidentally obtained a knowledge of many of the simples used by the Indians; but chiefly because I have obtained my knowledge generally in the like manner that the Indians do.

I have indeed had the advantage in my early life of a slight classical education, and of reading some books on the medical business: such as Buchanan, Tissot, Sharp, Culpepper, a little on anatomy, Smith on the nerves, Brown, &c. But as I never pretended to live by my practice, I kept very little of the

medicine of the shops; consequently my advices to my friends mostly were simples; and by this means I have by continued observation come to be of opinion, that our best medicines grow in the woods and gardens. I conceive, moreover, that my mind has providentially been led a step higher than the ancients or the Indians; their views being little more than "*This thing is good for that thing; this medicine will cure that complaint.*" But it stands demonstrated to me, that there are but two radical disorders (see Introduction chap. 2) consequently there need be only two classes of medicine.

In cases of debility, give No. 1 or No. 2, and then brace up, and correct the flatulence and spasms with No. 9, No. 25 and No. 26, promote a gentle respiration, and you will mostly cure all cases of debility.

The cases of plethora and irritation are to be corrected on as simple and general a plan.

Now since I have adopted these views, I seldom feel at a loss to know what ails any patient, or what medicine is suitable to apply.

I have here prescribed many things, so that you may have variety of choice.

Some cases, however, require a radical recruit of the iron property in the blood; and every thing will be in vain until that is done. Such I believe is consumption, derangement, &c. unto which stimulants should be applied; such as Nos. 2, 15, 16, No. 9 and 26, to take off the spasms and flatulence; but the radical cure should be attempted with No. 44 and No. 5. See No. 45.

I mention so many numbers not that they should all be used at once. Yet no one alone should be trusted to—and they may all or any of them be applied in their turns, should the first fail.

Dropsy, echronic-rheumatism, palsy, fits, cramps, &c. I conceive have the same root, and require the like treatment. But there are some medicines which

become common to both diathesis: they are stimulants, and therefore proper to cases of debility in general. Yet when given in plethora and irritation, they soon carry the tide of flood to its summit, and by an easy transition bring on a salutary indirect debility. This may be noticed in the three first numbers and in No. 16, and 26. And corresponds with the use of opium generally. This may stand demonstrated in the pleurisy and other cases that are akin to it. When these stimulant medicines, therefore, are applied, they are not only proper for debility, but perhaps the best that can be for plethora and irritation. This we may rationally account for, when we consider that all emetics and cathartics operate on the principles of indirect debility.

My prescriptions in general I must leave to speak for themselves: I, however, feel a degree of satisfaction in thinking that herein I have in prospect the real benefit of my own children and of their rising, numerous progeny and my fellow men in general, as to their bodily comfort in this life.